

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04

NSAE-00 SIL-01 SY-05 PM-03 H-02 L-03 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /073 W

----- 112482

R 201218Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6209

INFO CINCPAC HONOLULU

COMUSMACTHAI

DIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 11931

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB, TH

SUBJECT: LABOR SITUATION

REF: A. BANGKOK 11216; B. BANGKOK 11190

SUMMARY: THAILAND'S LABOR SCENE IS NOW RELATIVELY PEACEFUL. THERE ARE SEVERAL SMALL DISPUTES AND ONE LARGE, BUT PEACEFUL, PROTEST UNDERWAY IN BANGKOK. END SUMMARY.

1. THAI SECURITY GUARDS ARE CONTINUING THEIR WORK STOPPAGE AND REMAIN ENCAMPED, SEVERAL THOUSAND STRONG, AT SANAM LUANG PARK IN BANGKOK. SECURITY FOR US TENANTED BASES IS CURRENTLY BEING PROVIDED BY AN AMALGAM OF NON-STRIKING GUARDS, REGULAR THAI MILITARY PERSONNEL, AND AMERICAN MILITARY PERSONNEL. STRIKERS HAVE MET WITH MEMBERS OF THE SUPREME COMMAND FORWARD, A MEMBER OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S STAFF, AND MACTHAI REPRESENTATIVES IN AN EFFORT TO SATISFY THEIR DEMANDS, (REFTEL A).

2. SALTSHAKER US ARMY AMMUNITION ACTIVITY WORKERS HAVE QUIETLY PACKED UP AND LEFT THEIR ENCLAVE ON THE SIDEWALK BESIDE THE
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EMBASSY FRONT GATE. BOREDOM AND INCLEMENT WEATHER ARE THOUGHT

TO HAVE HASTENED THEIR DEPARTURE (REFTEL B).

3. THE DUSIT THANI HOTEL REMAINS CLOSED, PICKETED, AND PEACEFUL (REFTEL B). A SMALL BAND OF PICKETS IS STILL IN PLACE NEAR THE HOTEL ENTRANCE, BUT ATTRACT LITTLE ATTENTION FROM PASSERS-BY. MEANWHILE STRIKE LEADERS CONTINUE TO PRESSURE THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE TO INTERVENE AND FORCE THE HOTEL TO REOPEN AND REHIRE THE DISMISSED 115 WORKERS. BOMB-THROWING AND SHOOTING OF THE TYPE THAT OCCURRED IN THE AREA OF THE HOTEL LAST WEEK HAS NOW SHIFTED TO A DIFFERENT PART OF THE CITY AS STUDENT GANGS BATTLE WITH BUS DRIVERS AND AMONG THEMSELVES.

4. IN A NEW DEVELOPMENT, THAI AM, AN AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE COMPANY WITH SEVERAL US MILITARY CONTRACTS, WAS PRESENTED BY LABOR WITH A LIST OF DEMANDS EARLY IN THE WEEK. THE DEMANDS STEM FROM IMPENDING FORCE REDUCTIONS DUE TO THE LOSS OF SOME US MILITARY MAINTENANCE CONTRACTS AT THE END OF FY 75. EMPLOYEES DEMANDED (AMONG OTHER THINGS), THAT AMERICAN MANAGEMENT PERSONNEL AND ELECTRONIC DATA PROCESSING EQUIPMENT BE REMOVED IN AN EFFORT TO PRESERVE JOBS FOR 276 EMPLOYEES SCHEDULED FOR TERMINATION. AFTER THE INITIAL FLARE-UP EMPLOYEES RETURNED TO THEIR JOBS AND RESUMED NORMAL OPERATIONS. AMERICAN OFFICIALS AT DON MUANG AIRPORT SAID THERE IS LITTLE SUPPORT FOR THE DEMANDS AMONG THE 750 MORE SENIOR WORKERS UNAFFECTED BY THE CURRENT RIF. WHITEHOUSE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SECURITY GUARDS, LABOR STRIKES, PERSONNEL COMPENSATION, LABOR DISPUTES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 20 JUN 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975BANGKO11931
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750215-0748
From: BANGKOK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750627/aaaaaypm.tel
Line Count: 86
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 BANGKOK 11216, 75 BANGKOK 11190
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23 JUL 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <24 JUL 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LABOR SITUATION
TAGS: ELAB, MARR, TH
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006